Payroll jobs steady into August

Media Release

Released 7/09/2023

Source: Weekly Payroll Jobs, Week ending 12 August 2023

Payroll jobs remained relatively steady (down 0.1 per cent) in the month to 12 August 2023, following a 0.3 per cent fall in the previous month, according to figures released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

Bjorn Jarvis, ABS head of labour statistics, said: "Payroll jobs remained steady into August. Most industries saw small payroll job losses in this period, which were offset by a seasonal rise in Education and training as students returned from their winter holidays."

Some of the apparent weakness in the latest data reflects reporting patterns that are seen around the change in financial years. The interpretation of change in payroll jobs early in the financial year can be more challenging, until business reporting is more complete.

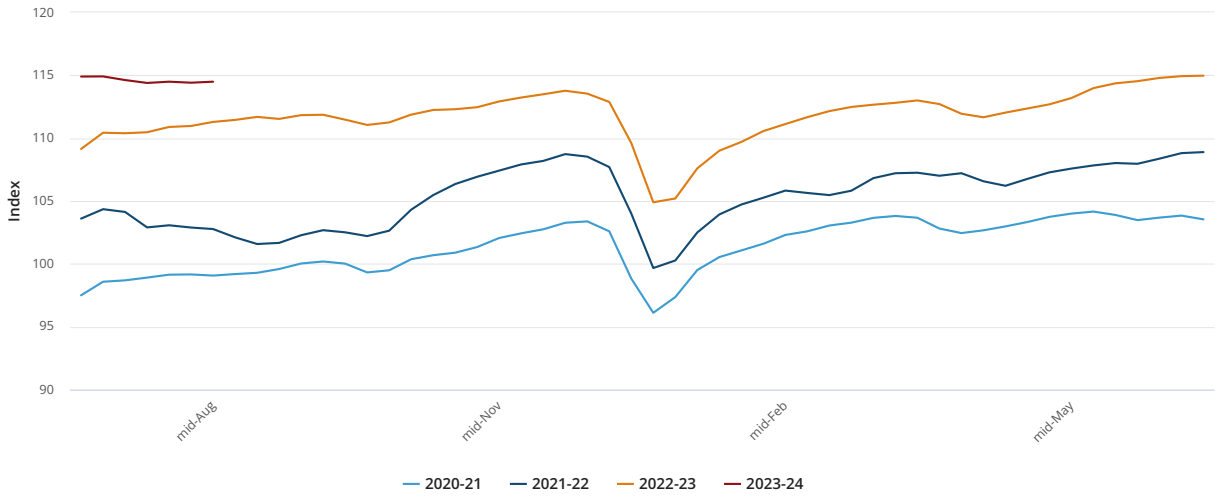
"The first month and a half of 2023-24 payroll jobs data follows particularly strong growth across 2022-23, coming out of the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic and a historically tight labour market (/media-centre/media-releases/unemployment-rate-35-cent-june) ," Mr Jarvis said.

"Given what we usually see in this data at this point in the year, the latest data does not necessarily suggest weakness in jobs growth, but may be an indication that the labour market is growing at a slower rate.

"Over the 12 months to mid-August 2023, payroll jobs rose 2.9 per cent.

"This was less than the annual growth rates seen earlier in 2023, and also below the 8.3 per cent annual growth to mid-August 2022, which included the strong recovery in payroll jobs after the COVID-19 Delta period in 2021."

Payroll jobs, year on year comparison



Indexed to the week ending 14 March 2020

Mid-Aug represents the week ending 15 August 2020, 14 August 2021, 13 August 2022 and 12 August 2023.

Mid-Nov represents the week ending 14 November 2020, 13 November 2021 and 12 November 2022.

Mid-Feb represents the week ending 13 February 2021, 12 February 2022 and 11 February 2023.

Mid-May represents the week ending 15 May 2021, 14 May 2022, and 13 May 2023.

States and territories

In the month to mid-August 2023, payroll jobs fell slightly in five of eight jurisdictions, with the largest falls in Victoria, Queensland and Tasmania (all falling 0.3 per cent).

“Seasonal change in the Education and training industry after the winter holidays was the largest source of growth in payroll jobs across all states and territories.

“This underpinned the 0.6 per cent payroll jobs rise in Western Australia and 0.4 per cent payroll jobs rise in the Northern Territory in the month to mid-August 2023,” Mr Jarvis said.

Media notes

- Payroll jobs are not seasonally adjusted, which generally requires at least three years of reasonably stable data. The longstanding seasonally adjusted Labour Force statistics series can aid in the interpretation of labour statistics across periods of greater seasonality, through the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Payroll jobs are predominantly employee jobs paid through payrolls. Some industries, such as Agriculture, forestry and fishing and Construction have high proportions of owner managers who are not included in payroll reporting. See the Scope and coverage section in the Methodology (/statistics/labour/jobs/weekly-payroll-jobs/latest-release#methodology) of this release for more information.
- In each release, payroll job estimates are revised as more complete data are received. The magnitude of revisions can vary at some points of the year, such as the start and end of the financial and calendar year in line with changes in the reporting activity of businesses.
- The ABS acknowledges the continued support of the ATO in enabling the ABS to produce weekly insights into the Australian labour market from Single Touch Payroll data.
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